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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

**INFORMATION REPORT**

COUNTRY Czechoslovakia

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SUBJECT Information on the Ostrava Region: Post-Currency Reform  
Prices/Availability of Products/Housing Situation/General  
Living Conditions/Organization of the Dukla Pit/Workers'  
Riots/Stakhanovite Working Standards

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Prices

2. "After the monetary reform of 30 May 1953 and the institution of new currency,  
the following prices were prevalent in the district of Moravska Ostrava:

(Prices in Kcs. Given for units of one kg, one liter or one piece, unless  
otherwise specified.)

Item	Price	Item	Price
Roll	0.60 Kcs	Common sausage	30. Kcs
Bread	3.	Sugar in powder	14.
Lard	30.- 40.	Sugar in lumps	12.60
Butter	44.	Tea	200.
Beef meat	20.	Rum	60.
Pork meat	32.- 25.	'plumber'	60.
Tinned beef	( $\frac{1}{2}$ kg) 16.	'plumber 55%	90.
Tinned pork	(1 kg) 25.	Liquors	50.- 120.
Dried sausage	40.	Imported white wine	30.- 40.
Ham	70.	Rice	35.
Tinned pie	( $\frac{1}{2}$ kg) 10.		
Stewed plums			
(About 80 dkg)	16.		
1 shirt	40.- 70.	1 ticket to cinema	3.- 4.50
Underwear shirt	45.	Toilet soap	10.
Shirts	20.	10 pieces of	
Gloves	70.-80.	Partizan cigarettes	1.80

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Item	Price	Item	Price
Working shoes	120. Kcs	1 packet of pipe tobacco	3. Kcs
Good shoes	200.	Pobeda watch	960.
Hair cut	3.	Pobeda watch of gold	2500.
Shave	2.	(The buyer must provide 15 grammes of the gold himself)	
Talisman radio			
341 tubes	940.		
Dominant radio	2500.		

Availability of Goods

- 25X1 3. [ ] displayed in the shop window of the Jednota firm the following goods: tinned meat, sugar, sausages, alcohol, rice and tinned milk.
- 25X1 4. "In all shop windows [ ] slogans backing the Five-Year Economic Program and the new Czechoslovakian president: 'With President Zapotocky for peace and social administration'.
- 25X1 5. "In Ostrava [ ] plenty of tinned meat from Hungary and fish from the USSR.
- 25X1 6. "The sale of some products to customers is still limited despite the currency reform: sugar - only  $\frac{1}{2}$  kg, tinned meat - 1 kg, flour - 5 kg, lard - 1 kg, coffee - 100 gr, tea - 50 gr. If somebody requests a large order the salesman is obliged to register the name of the buyer and submit a report on him to the local SNB. The shops are checked by SNB officers of the local committee (MNV). The shops must give to the officials the addresses of the buyers who want to buy more food than allowed. The buyer is called before the MNV local Soviet. If the MNV finds out he has really bought more food than allowed he is punished by jail, or fines.
- 25X1 7. "After the currency reform, all kinds of food were available at Moravska Ostrava except imported fruits. After the currency reform the people had to stand in queues before the following enterprises: Jednota, Budoucnost, and TEP. [ ] no black beer, but 4% white beer was available at 1.70 Kc per liter, 10% at 3.20 per liter, 12% at 5.20 per liter.
8. "For comparison, a miner in the coal mines may earn 10.70 Kc per hour, but only if he has fulfilled his norm 100 per cent. A miner's helper receives 5.50 - 5.70 Kc per hour. Single workers receive a discount of 190 Kc out of each 1000 Crowns /sic/.

Transfer to Industrial Production

9. "Politically unreliable' elements of the population, especially administrative officers, are transferred to industrial production. After the release from their old job, they receive a sum in the new currency to pay for new working clothes and receive a guarantee to receive the same salary during the next three months as they did in their former administrative employment. If their new wages are not as high as their former wages, the employer is obliged to pay the difference.

Housing Situation

- 25X1 10. "There is a lack of flats in the district of Moravska Ostrava. As an example, one of my fellow miners who was married and the father of three children has received just one kitchen and two rooms. Single people have no flats. Only CP bosses or Stakhanov workers may receive flats consisting of kitchen and one other room. CP members also receive preferential treatment in regard to working conditions in general and in the army and state administration. If somebody leaves a flat, he is obliged to report all changes to the housing department of the local Soviet (MNV). If somebody leaves his flat for holidays, he is obliged to report his change in residence to the Security Corps (SNB). He is not obliged to do so if he is leaving only for 24 hours. Furniture is available but [ ] it is of very low quality.

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Employment of Women

11. "Women are obliged to go to work because of the bad economical situation in Czechoslovakia. Women are not working  
25X1 in the underground pits, but they are working on top of the pits. Conductors on the street cars and trains are mostly women. Women are being increasingly used as bus-drivers. Women are receiving wages equal to men's.
12. "Near Stonava, where a coal mine is to be opened soon, a new forced labor camp has been established for men.

Cheaper Travel Fees

13. "Members of the Czechoslovak Security Corps [SNB] and workers in the heavy industry may now travel at cheaper prices. Miners and iron workers receive a 50% discount on trains from home to work and trains used during holidays.

Organization of the Dukla Pit

14. "The CP organized the Dukla Pit in the following manner: It was divided into four sections, one section consisting of the workers on top of the pit, and three sections consisting of workers below the surface of the pit.

Workers' Riots at Moravska Ostrava

15. "On 6 and 7 June 1953, there were workers' riots at Moravska Ostrava in which about 10,000 people took part. The riots were caused by five citizens, 1 e, one woman, two members of the Security Corps and two workers. All were arrested. Thousands of workers marched through Moravska Ostrava and were stopped by the SNB with submachine guns, workers militia and military units. The soldiers had bayonets on their rifles. When the rioters saw the soldiers marching toward them they shouted: 'The soldiers should go always with the people', with the result that the officers gave orders to the soldiers to put their rifles back on their shoulders. The SNB showed a much more dangerous attitude than the army. The factory militia showed the most antagonistic attitude and beat the rioters with rifles. About 50 rioters were slightly injured. Nobody was killed. The rioters requested a return to the old currency. The Communist Party bosses promised the rioters compensation for working hours lost during the riots, but   don't know any example of the arrested people having returned back to work after the Riots.
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Stakhanovite Working Standards

16. "The best Stakhanov worker in the Moravska Ostrava mining district is [fnu] Miska who was used as an example in all the propaganda posters. After the currency reform, the workers' Communist unions decided to transfer Miska to the pits with the bad conditions with the result that they found out that the Communist Miska was a success only because of the best working places, and not because he was a skilled worker. In the pit with bad conditions he could not fulfil even the fundamental norm."

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